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# HATE CRIMES IN MONTANA 1992

by  
Bob Liffing  
Director  
Montana Criminal Justice  
Statistical Analysis Center

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# **HATE CRIMES IN MONTANA 1992**

## **OVERVIEW**

In 1992, a total of nine (9) hate crimes were reported to local law enforcement agencies in Montana. These were reported by five (5) separate agencies. Although the number of these crimes are too small to develop reliable profiles, tabulation of the types of crimes involved, the months in which they occurred, the types of prejudice involved and the types of victims involved are presented later in this document.

Because of the way the information was collected and because of the lack of training, understanding, and awareness of local law enforcement staff as to what constitutes a hate crime, the number of Hate Crimes reported for 1992 in Montana may be under-reported.

On the other hand, those that are reporting Hate Crimes may be over-reporting. A review of incident reports by the MUCR staff shows how difficult it is to classify Hate Crimes. Several of the incidents classified as hate crimes by the local agencies are not considered to be hate crimes by MUCR Staff. Extracts of incident reports for some of the crimes which are classified as hate crimes in this document are presented later for the reader to appreciate the difficulty in identifying Hate Crimes.

Table 1. Type of Crimes involved in  
Hate Crimes (Montana, 1992)

TYPE OF CRIME	NUMBER
Aggravated Assault	1
Simple Assault with Hands, Feet, Fists	2
Vandalism of the Victim's Residence	3
Disorderly Conduct (Harassment using Profane Language)	1
Disorderly Conduct (Intimidation)	2
TOTAL	9

TABLE 2. Months in Which the Hate Crimes Occurred  
(Montana, 1992)

MONTH	NUMBER
April	2
July	1
August	3
October	1
November	1
December	1
TOTAL	9

**TABLE 3. Type of Bias or Prejudice Involved  
in the Hate Crimes  
(Montana, 1992)**

<b>BIAS TYPE</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>
<b>Racial</b>	<b>6</b>
Anti-White	2
Anti-Black	3
Anti-Native American	1
<b>RELIGIOUS</b>	<b>3</b>
Anti-Jewish	1
Anti-Protestant	1
Anti-Other Religion	1
<b>ETHNICITY/NATIONAL ORIGIN</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>SEXUAL</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>

TABLE 4. Type of Victims subjected to Hate Crimes  
(Montana, 1992)

VICTIM TYPE	NUMBER
Individual*	5
Religious Organization	1
Unknown	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>

\* In all cases involving a individual victim, only a single victim was identified.

TABLE 5. Offender's (Suspect's) and Victim's Race  
involved in a Racial Hate Crime (Montana, 1992)

VICTIM'S RACE	OFFENDER'S RACE	NUMBER
White	Native American	2
Black	White	1
Black	Native American	2
Native American	Unknown	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6</b>

## EXAMPLES

The following are actual abstracts from incident reports written by investigating officers on the scene. Each has been designated as a "Hate Crime" by the local agency and MUCR program. Much judgement is involved in making this decision. These examples are presented here to show how difficult it is to decide whether or not a crime should actually be classified as a "Hate Crime". You be the judge.

### EXAMPLE #1

Officers were dispatched to a disturbance call at (a local bar) and given a description of the individual causing the disturbance. Upon arrival they saw an individual matching the description walking on the street a block away. A backup officer in another vehicle stopped this individual.

(Officers) enter the bar and were met by the bartender. The bartender said that (the offender) had been in the bar since 2030 hours, became intoxicated by calling several black patrons, "Nigger". When the bartender asked (the offender) to leave, he called, "You f.... Nigger lover" to the bartender and produced a knife. Another patron (Patron #2) of the bar, saw the knife, grabbed (the offender), and escorted him out of the bar. As they left the bar, the knife somehow fell from (the offender's) hand, and was secured by (Patron #2). While being escorted, (the offender) was shouting, "F... you, niggers" and "You don't belong here, you f... niggers".

Officers placed (the offender) under arrest and transported him to the county jail. He was charged with disorderly conduct, booked in and custody was transferred to the county jail.

## Example #2

On Wednesday, (Mother) brought (Victim), her daughter to the station to report on a assault. Mother stated that (Victim) was going to stay at a friend's overnight. However, a family emergency came up during the night so they sent (Victim) home with (Offenders #1 and #2) who are cousins to (Friend). When the girls got in front of (Victim's) house, (Offender #1) kicked (Victim) in the face, then held her while (Offender #2) kicked her. (Offender #1) bit her on the right ear; she was hit and kicked several times. (Victim) just laid on the ground and took the kicking.

Injuries: bruised left eye, bruised right cheek, abrasion right side of forehead, abrasion and bruise back of left shoulder, back of right ear black and blue, lacerations on left knee. Officer took photographs of the injuries and placed the film in evidence.

The investigator had difficulty in contacting and talking to the victim at a later time. When finally contacted, he reported that the victim stated that (offender #1) beat her up because was now going with (Offender #1's) old boy friend and that (offender #1) does not like white people. (Victim) stated there was no conversation between the two prior to the fight and (Offender #1) just started hitting her. Since this incident there has been no re-occurrence. (Victim) didn't care what the investigators did about the incident. The investigator was unable to contact suspects, (Offenders #1 and #2). Later, he decided not to charge offender due to victim's disinterest in what would occur and her vagueness in giving details of the incident.



### Example #3

... Someone threw eggs and tomatoes at victim's house. Would like (officer) to come and talk to them when he's back on duty, Wednesday. (Victim had the local reputation of being a religious fanatic... After talking with the investigating officer, he reported that the complainant did not wish to carry it any further.)

### Example #4

Officer contacted (Victim) at his residence. He said three Indian males followed him from the north side and threw a rock through the south side window (of his residence) about 3 minutes after he arrived.

(Victim) said he had never seen the suspects before, but said they shouted racial slurs at him while following him. (Victim) and these suspects were possibly involved in some kind of disturbance at (second Location). However, everyone was gone from there upon officer's arrival and the people inside the residence there didn't want to talk to us or give us their names.

After speaking to (Victim) and (Witness), Officers cleared. No further action was taken.

Damage to Window approx. \$50.

## Example #5

I was dispatched along with (Officer #2) to be on the lookout for the above described vehicle. The driver of this vehicle, later identified as (Offender), was reported to just fired multiple shots at (Bar/Restaurant)..... While enroute to the (Bar/Restaurant), we were advised by dispatch the County S O Officers had located the vehicle and driver and were out with same in a nearby parking lot. Upon arrival, we found the scene as described and numerous witnesses from (Bar/Restaurant) present. (Officer #3) also arrived this scene at this time.

....(Offender) was standing alone on the sidewalk. As I approached her to question her as to her involvement, I was approached by (Witness #1), a bouncer for the bar/restaurant. His first words to me were "that's who you want!" He went on to say that it was (Offender) who was doing the shooting at the (Bar/Restaurant) and that he personally witnessed this event, Another witness (Witness #2) also approached me and stated the same as Witness #1 had done.

Suspect at this point only indicated that (Witnesses #1 and #2) were telling the truth. She stated that "I was protecting myself from that black bitch". (Offender) went on to say that she had gotten into a fight with a black female in the (Bar/Restaurant). During this fight (Offender) had her shirt torn.

At this time I cuffed (Offender), placing her in my patrol vehicle until further investigation of this incident. As I was placing (offender) in my vehicle, (Officer #3) advised me that he had located the gun in (Offender's) vehicle... (Officer #3) had recovered and secured the weapon at this time.

At this time, I began to interview the witnesses present...

(Witness #1) stated that as he first went outside, (Offender) was in her vehicle and driving through the parking lot, firing a handgun as she drove. (Witness #1) stated that there were numerous persons (patrons) standing outside of the (bar/restaurant's) front door... He was "worried for their safety and began to usher everyone inside. I asked (Witness # 1) if (Offender) was firing the gun in the "air"/ Witness #1) definitely felt the (offender) was not "simply" firing straight up in the air. He described her as having her arm holding the weapon at an obvious "angle and firing numerous times in the direction of the bar and adjacent business....

(Witness #1) stated that he had heard (Offender's) claim as to a "fight" with a "black chick" while inside the (Bar/Restaurant). He state to the best of this knowledge there had not been any fight. He was the bouncer and had not been notified of any fight and was not asked to break up any fight.....

Given the described incident by our witnesses, the obvious "crowded" condition present at the bar this night (as seen by myself), the number of homes in the immediate area, the fact that "numerous" rounds were fired by (the Offender) in and obvious intoxicated state making her unaware of just where these bullets were landing, I decided to arrest (offender) for Criminal Endangerment. She was so advised and transported to the county jail for processing and booking.

## Example 6

I spoke with (Complainant) in reference to a picture found at her place of employment, next to a local church. The picture depicts a devil form with the following, "I like satan so I swore and became one. So much for ORC. I am him you local clergy."

(Complainant) informed me that this was found a few days ago by a fellow employee who was not there and could not be reached at this time for a statement. He found the article in the back parking lot laying on the ground. It appeared as though it had been taped to a parking sign. The painting/scripture was entered into the agency's evidence locker.

A week earlier, another report was taken from the church. In this complaint, a plaster cross with serpent was found. It is not known if these incidents are related.

### Week Later--another complaint

I spoke with (Complainant) in reference to various satanic articles found stapled to a telephone pole outside her place of business (a church). The objects included a paper cross and poster with a satanic piece. This is the same pole where another satanic picture was found. (See Incident #)

## Example #7

... Upon arrival I spoke to (Complainant) who explained to me that over the past several weeks she has been the brunt of racial harassment. The action happens on the bus on the way to school. Her parent's house has also been hit with eggs and most recently the picture window in the front room has been broken by either a BB or pellet gun. I spoke with the mother who stated that her daughter and in fact her whole family is not liked in the neighborhood. She showed me a "FOR SALE" sign which had been thrown on their lawn one evening....

The house was also egged on .... Parts of the shells were still on the house. (Complainant's mother) cannot say for sure when the window was broken, but upon inspection it did not appear to be that either a pellet or BB gun had done the damage. I did not find any pellet or BB. The family did not see who did the damage, but have a feeling it involves the following individuals... All of these individuals are between 13 to 16 years of age. They have harassed the complainants at school and on the bus. I did not have a chance to talk to any of these individuals. I told (Complainant's Mother) to try to get a hold of us when the actions are happening to the house, but she stated it would be difficult because they do not have a phone.

I stated that without real proof it would be difficult to accuse the juveniles mentioned of the egging or the window. The family understood, but wanted the incidents on the record. High School officials have been trying to deal with the racial situation.











MONTANA BOARD OF CRIME CONTROL  
303 NORTH ROBERTS  
HELENA, MT 59620

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